

THE  
**SHEKEL**

APWA



VOLUME XLIII

No 6

Nov-Dec 2010

# RUMBLE IN THE RUBBLE

MOSQUE EXCAVATION:  
COINS CONTRADICT  
WAKF DENIALS OF  
ANCIENT JUDAEA'S  
EXISTENCE



- PLUS:**
- SALE OF THE CENTURY
  - SAVING BULGARIA'S JEWS
  - RUSSIAN SHTETL NOTES
  - DATING ANCIENTS

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ANDREW PERALA, EDITOR

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# **American Israel Numismatic association**

Website: **www.theshekel.org**

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## **OFFICERS**

Mel Wacks, President

Contact Mel via e-mail: [ainapresident@gmail.com](mailto:ainapresident@gmail.com)

Or by telephone: (818) 225-1348

Josh Prottas, Vice-President

Donna Sims, Treasurer

Roger Merritt, Secretary

## **GENERAL CONTACT**

Donna Sims

P.O. Box 20255

Fountain Hills, AZ 85269

Email: [dancin.donna@yahoo.com](mailto:dancin.donna@yahoo.com)

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Josh Prottas, Roger Merritt, Ira Rezak (2011)

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Mel Wacks, Michael Mooney, Sagi Salomon (2013)

## **EDITOR, *The Shekel***

Andrew Perala

P.O. Box 6626

Kamuela, Hawaii 96743

Email: [aperala@aol.com](mailto:aperala@aol.com)

## **EMERITI**

Florence Schuman, Treasurer Emeritus

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# A SPECIAL MESSAGE

## ABOUT JUNIORS, SENIORS AND EVERYONE ELSE

I am excited at the number of juniors joining AINA - through gift memberships, free first-year memberships courtesy of the Kittredge Foundation, and those who have joined on their own.

It's not easy to compete with the Internet, the Ipods, Ipad, Blackberries and all the latest electronic gizmos - but

*The Shekel* contains interesting and informative articles that you can't find anywhere else!

And we are especially pleased to publish articles submitted by teenagers - including one in this issue by a new member - Aaron Kogon.

I ask all our members to help in passing along the history of the Jewish People, the history of the Holy Land, the lessons of the Holocaust, the miracle of Israel, and much more to new generations by giving gift memberships to teenagers at no cost, and to follow up by paying for the renewals at just \$10 a year. You spend more when you go to McDonald's!

Send us at least one name today along with his or her age and give a teenager a lifetime interest in history, and as a bonus, perhaps even ignite his or her interest in the wonderful hobby of coin collecting.

And I have a special message to our junior members. Please give us the names and ages of your teen-

age friends and relatives whom you think would also enjoy reading *The Shekel*, and getting a free membership medal, and much more - and we will send them a free membership courtesy of the Kittredge Foundation.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Editor, Andrew Peralá, and I also look forward to receiving more articles from our junior members - as well as your suggestions on how we can serve you better.

And being of that age, I have also been thinking about seniors. Lots of seniors are looking for something to read - something interesting to do.

*The Shekel* makes a great gift for anyone from 10 to 100. And we welcome articles from all of our members.

Whether you are a junior or senior member, or something in between - we greatly appreciate your membership and wish you a happy and healthy 2011.

Happy New Year,



# THE QUIET WAR

*IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL TODAY, ANCIENT COINS  
ARE BULWARKS AGAINST A CAMPAIGN OF  
DISINFORMATION, DENIAL AND DESTRUCTION*

BY D. BERNARD HOENIG

The ancient Jewish coin has become a powerful weapon in the “war of words” being waged against radical Islamists seeking to break or at the very least deny Israel’s 3,000-year-old bond with Jerusalem.

Found in desert caves and drainage ditches, buried under mounds of rubble, recovered from the bottom of the sea or sealed in centuries-old clay jars, these tiny discs of gold, silver and bronze have unequivocally confirmed classical religious and historical texts.

Of course, for all believers in the Bible no corroboration of Judaism’s ties to Jerusalem is necessary. What is recorded in the Torah and classical Judaism has always sufficed.

Still, even the devoutly faithful acknowledge today’s urgent need for “hard evidence” to expose the frauds being perpetrated against Israel.

Directing the insidious Arab propaganda campaign is the Muslim Wakf – the Islamic Religious Trust graciously allowed by Israel after the Six Day War to continue its custodianship of the Temple Mount complex.

Since then, the Wakf has betrayed that trust, arrogantly dismissing all laws, agreements and the goodwill shown to it by Israel.

Employing disinformation and revisionism reminiscent of Nazi Germany’s “Big Lie,” the Wakf has seduced the gullible into believing that

perhaps the Jewish People really have no connection to Jerusalem.

With the backing of the Palestinian Authority, the Wakf has systematically destroyed numerous ancient Jewish sites above and beneath the Temple Mount: thousands of antiquities from the First and Second Temple eras have been lost.

As scientists and educators, biblical archeologists have come to recognize their important role in combating the perfidious Muslim declarations. Nothing has counteracted that perfidy more than the discoveries of biblical sites, ancient structures, pottery, coins, glass and scrolls.

But it is the ancient Jewish coin that has distinguished itself in the ongoing battle – more so, perhaps, than all other archeological finds.

Although not dated according to any calendar year, many such coins bear legends relating to specific eras.

Names and titles of rulers are frequently shown together with symbols and inscriptions supporting biblical and

talmudic texts. For example, coins from Bar-Kochba’s revolt against Rome between 132/3 and 134/5 CE register the dates of the war (year 1, year 2, etc.) next to ancient Hebrew script: of the redemption (or freedom) of Israel.

Some are inscribed with the great warrior’s first name – shimon.

On a small bronze prutah – one of the first



*Images courtesy TempleInstitute.com*

*A rare silver half shekel struck in 66/67 CE was found in the Temple Mound excavation rubble by a 14-year-old volunteer in December 2008.*

*Continued*



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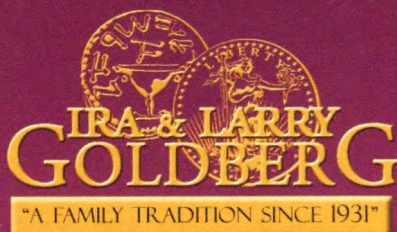
**Judea Capta  
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Gold Aureus H-769  
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# ASTONISHING DENIAL OF HISTORY

*Continued*

Jewish coins ever minted – the words king alexander, year 25 is engraved, referring to the Hasmonean king Alexander Yannai. The date reflects the 25th year of Alexander's reign (78 BCE).

Even non-Jewish coinage has challenged madcap fabrications such as those uttered by Palestinian Authority's Chief Justice Sheik Taysir Tamimi: "No Jewish Temples ever existed, and references to Jerusalem in Jewish, Byzantine and Roman writings were all forgeries."

Neutralizing such baseless statements is the notorious Judaea Capta coin struck in 70 CE by Rome to "celebrate" its conquest of Judaea.

A variety of gold, silver and bronze issues, minted for 26 consecutive years thereafter, bear the profiles of Emperor Vespasian or his sons Titus and Domitian on the obverse.

On the reverse, a captured and bound "Weeping Woman of Judaea" is depicted sitting under the watchful eye of a Roman soldier or beneath a war trophy. The words judaea capta or judaea devicta (Judaea has been conquered or Judaea has been defeated) surround her.

Ironically, that very coin – despised by the Jewish people – is now redeeming itself as bona fide proof of Jerusalem's Jewish past, albeit in the context of tragedy and conquest.

Although not openly declaring "archeological war" on the Muslim Wakf, the State of Israel's Antiquities Authority (IAA) has been at the forefront in opposing the Muslim propaganda.

In November 2009, the IAA and the East Jerusalem Development Company (a government firm that maintains tourist sites in Israel), offered the public a first glimpse of ancient coinage uncovered from numerous archeological expeditions. The exhibition, held at the Davidson Center in the Jerusalem Archeological Garden at the foot of the Temple Mount, was funded by the William Davidson and Estanne Fawer Foundations. The IAA's Gabriela Bijovsky is the exhibit curator.

Upon announcing the display, the Authority stated that "The coins ... are a living, tangible



*Images courtesy Goldberg Coins  
Arab propagandists even claim that Judaea Capta coins like this bronze sestertius issued by Vespasian, to boast of Rome's victory over the Jews, are fakes!*

testimony of Jerusalem's rich history ... as well as those ... from Persia, via North Africa and as far as France – a fact that attests to the centrality of Jerusalem for all the people who visited it thousands of years ago."

Included in the Davidson Exhibition are numerous bronze coins from the 103-year rule of the Hasmoneans between 140 and 37 BCE. Well-preserved coins from the reigns of Hasmonean kings Alexander Jannaeus, John Hyrcanus I and II, Aristobolus and Mattathias Antigonus are prominently displayed.

"These coins were found in Jerusalem in great quantities," said Dr. Donald Ariel, head of the Authority's Coin Department, "and even (their) flan moulds were found here – so these coins were definitely minted in the city."

More to the point, he said, "the ancient coins of the Jewish rulers who followed the Hasmoneans – i.e., the Herodians and the rebels of the First Jewish Revolt – were all found in the city in huge numbers."

In the exhibit, small and medium-sized bronze pieces recovered by the late Prof. Benjamin Mazar in 1975 at the Temple Mount's Southern Wall were on display.

Unearthed from layers of earth going back to the Second Temple, the coins were left in the ground during the final chapter in the five-year War of the Jews against Rome.

In 66 CE, Judaea's rebel leadership ordered the striking of uniquely Jewish coinage from melted-down coins of Rome coins and shekels

*Continued*



# FACT: ANCIENT COINS DENY LIES

*Continued*

of Tyre. It was the first time since the Hasmonean era that the Land of Israel (Eretz Yisrael) had its own money.

Each coin was struck from engraved dies with distinctly Judaic designs: pomegranates representing the priesthood; lulavim and etrogim symbolizing the freedom and religious joy that are so much a part of the Jewish holiday of Succot (Tabernacles); and Temple vessels declaring that Judaism was flourishing in all of Judaea.

Included in the coin display were silver half and full shekels from all five years of the war; bronze prutahs from the second and third years; and bronze eighth, quarter and half shekels of Year Four.

The issuance of the coinage was an audacious Jewish act. Rome was livid: minting money was one of the most defining acts of an emerging nation's independence.

Oddly enough, what attracted so many people to the special display of bronze coinage was their extremely poor condition – something normally spurned by collectors, who desire specimens of the highest quality. Most of the coins were burnt, scorched and scarred.

Some were so charred their legends and designs were illegible.

They were the survivors of the year 70 destruction of the Holy Temple.

Many of the prutah coins in the exhibit were dated shnat arba, meaning year four (the last full year of the war against Rome).

Following the date were the words l'geulat tzion (for the redemption of zion).

In the prior two years, each coin in the bronze series bore the legend l'cherut tzion, meaning for

the freedom of zion – a proud l'chaim-like salute to a free and independent Jerusalem. The change in language from “freedom” to “redemption” was Judaea's sigh of surrender, the people's acceptance that the end was near.

The new inscription also was a prayer that one day Jerusalem would again be redeemed.

In another arena, a daring group known as

The Temple Mount Sifting Project (or the Temple Mount Antiquities Salvage Operation) has been aggressively beating the Islamic Wakf at its own game.

The project was founded in 1994 by Zachy Zweig, a Bar-Ilan University student (now a prominent Israeli archeologist).

With friends, Zweig relentlessly challenged the Wakf's illegal excavations and construction above and beneath the Temple Compound.

Convinced that the Wakf's goal was to obliterate all evidence of Jewish history, Zweig monitored the Arabs' dumping into the Kidron Valley of more than 13,000 tons of debris removed from beneath the Temple Mount.

Much of that rubble came from the new subterranean mosque known as Al Marwani, said to accommodate 10,000 worshippers.

With the help of the Israel National Parks Authority and the IAA, he had the same dirt and rocks trucked to the Emek Tzurim National Park at the foot of Mount Scopus, where meticulous sifting procedures were conducted.

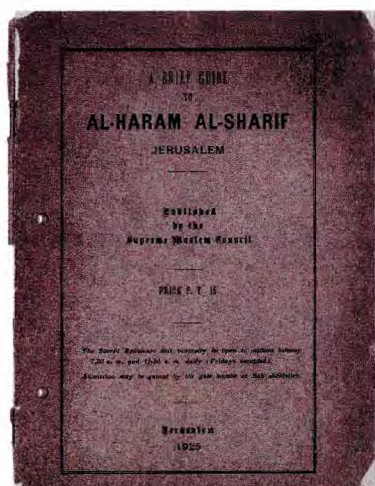
Since 2004, more than 60,000 volunteers of all ages, religions and nationalities have participated in the sifting project, much like the traditional children's activity of sifting sand for “buried treasure.”



*Photograph courtesy The Temple Mount Institute*  
An aerial view shows The Dome of the Rock near top center. The site of the disputed excavation, for the underground mosque, is labeled in the lower right corner of the photo.



# WAKF OFFICIAL TEXTS STATE SITE OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE IS "BEYOND DISPUTE"




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'No Jewish Temple ever existed, and references to Jerusalem in Jewish, Byzantine and Roman writings were all forgeries.'

- *Sheik Taysir Tamimi,*  
Chief Justice,  
Palestinian Authority

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'The (Temple Mount) site is one of the oldest in the world ... Its identity with the site of Solomon's Temple is beyond dispute.'

- *The Supreme Moslem Council*

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*Contradicting the modern-day pronouncement denying the existence of the Palestinian's Authority's Sheik Tamimi, top right, are statements in the Wakf official guide book from 1925, shown above left, as well as from 1950. Published by "The Supreme Moslem Council" (the Wakf) as the official Wakf guides to "Al-Haram Al-Sharif" the guide books describe the site of the Muslim Dome of the Rock mosque, and include statements affirming "beyond dispute" the identity of the site with Solomon's Temple. See the actual text below from Page 4 of the 1925 Wakf guide. Yellow underlining added to assist readers in locating the relevant text.*

The site is one of the oldest in the world. Its sanctity dates from the earliest (perhaps from pre-historic) times. Its identity with the site of Solomon's Temple is beyond dispute. This, too, is the spot, according to the universal belief, on which "David built there an altar unto the Lord, and offered burnt offerings and peace offerings". (1)

*Continued*

The Temple Mount Sifting Project is conducted today by Zweig and his former professor, world-renowned Dr. Gabriel Barkay of Bar-Ilan University's Institute of Archaeology.

Barkay became famous for his 1979 discovery near Jerusalem of the oldest known amulet (600 BCE) bearing the Bible's priestly benediction.

The project has uncovered more than 4,000 Judean, Greek, Roman and Byzantine coins (plus countless other artifacts such as potsherds, flint tools, weapons, glass, jewelry, talismans, seals and inscribed stones).

While most of the coinage has not yet been catalogued, one coin in particular was hailed as the group's most sensational discovery, and that

*Continued*



# HISTORY CANNOT BE REWRITTEN

*Continued*

was found by teenage volunteer sifter.

A rare half shekel from the beginning of the Judean uprising against Rome (66/67 CE) was discovered in December 2008 by 14-year-old volunteer Omri Ya'ari.

The obverse side of the coin depicts a branch with three blossoming pomegranates. Encircling the design, in ancient Paleo-Hebrew script, is the stirring legend *yerushalayim hakedosha* (Jerusalem the holy).

A chalice is pictured on the reverse with the letter Aleph (representing year one of the revolt).

Inside the rim, the words *chatzi shekel yisrael* – half shekel of Israel – give the coin's denomination.

Considered to be among the world's most beautiful ancient coins, each half shekel contains approximately seven grams of pure silver, in compliance with biblical law.

Immediately after the discovery, Barkay explained that "This is the first time a coin minted at the Temple Mount itself has been found,

"And therein lies its immense importance because similar coins have been found in the past in the Jerusalem area... as well as at Masada... but they are extremely rare in Jerusalem."

Equally fascinating, only a few months earlier, archeologist Zweig reported that a Greek-

Syrian coin directly related to the Hanukkah story had been found through sifting.

The bronze coin bore the portrait of Antiochus IV Epiphanes (pictured on our cover).

His tyrannical rule over the Jewish people ignited the fight for religious freedom in 167. That revolution was led by Mattathias the priest and his sons Judah, Simon and Jonathan – the Maccabees.

"The Antiochus coin found by our volunteers," said Zweig, "is not actually a rare coin (we now have seven of them). But the significance .. (it) is the first found in the Temple Mount itself."

Perhaps the real meaning behind the discovery was that the coin was all that remained of the tyrannical rule of Antiochus.

Antiochus desecrated the Beit Hamikdash, then attempted to dislodge the Jewish nation from Jerusalem. But all he left behind was a small, tarnished bronze coin buried beneath the Temple Mount.

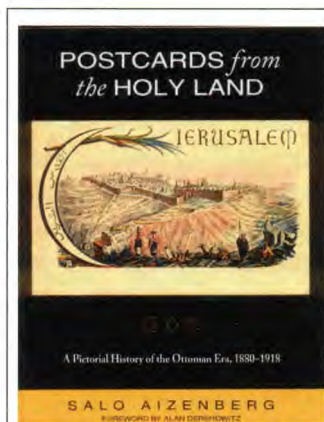
Just as Antiochus failed, so too will the Muslim Wakf. ☞

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*Editor's Note: This is an abridged version of an article that ran in the Jerusalem Post on Aug. 10, 2010. Reprinted with permission.*

*D. Bernard Hoenig is a member of A.I.N.A.*

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# SUIT FAILS TO STOP DESTRUCTION

Reprinted from Arutz 7

Cheshvan 28, 5771,

Nov. 5, 2010

**By Maayana Miskin**

**Israelnationalnews.com**

The High Court ruled against the Israel Law Center this week in a petition aimed at stopping the destruction of Jewish artifacts dating back to the Temple era. The court ruled that the destruction cannot be stopped using private prosecution. In addition to rejecting the private case against the Islamic Wakf Authority on the Temple Mount, the High Court rejected the Israel Law Center's demand that the attorney general be ordered to take action against the Temple Mount destruction.

The Israel Law Center (Shurat HaDin) had filed suit against the Wakf on behalf of 150 Israeli citizens. Charges were filed over the Wakf's use of bulldozers to carry out unauthorized construction in the area, despite archaeologists' warnings that the machinery was demolishing ancient Jewish artifacts.

Attorneys from the Israel Law Center accused the Wakf of deliberately destroying Jewish artifacts in order to eradicate evidence of the Jewish claim to the Temple Mount. By neglecting to take action to stop the demolition of ancient historical finds, the Israel government has been "abandoning the millenniums-long Jewish claim over the Temple Mount and allowing Islamic extremists to re-write Jerusa-

## NEWS UPDATE

lem's history," they said.

The attorney general's office had tried to get the Israel Law Center suit dismissed, arguing that private citizens should not be allowed to prosecute in a case that affects the general public. The Law Center responded by accusing the attorney general of caving in to political pressure.

The Islamic Wakf has been carrying out illegal construction on the Temple Mount for more than a decade. The work has been allowed to continue despite archaeologists' protests that ancient artifacts are being crushed.

The Wakf has denied that any First Temple-period artifacts are located on the Temple Mount.

The Israel Law Center released a statement saying, "It is absurd that while the Israeli government is mounting an international campaign against UNESCO to protest its labeling Rachel's Tomb and the Cave of the Machpelah [Tomb of the Patriarchs - ed.] in Hevron as Muslim mosques and denying their Jewish origins, it obstructs Shurat HaDin from acting to safeguard the status of the Jewish people's holiest site."

Law Center head Attorney Nitzana Darshan-Leitner said the High Court ruling in the case "gave the Islamic Wakf a free pass to continue its destruction of Israel's sacred heritage sites." ☞



# EMERGENCY MONEY OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION

## SHTETL SOCIETY CRITICAL TO SURVIVAL FOR JEWS WHEN GOVERNMENTS FAIL

By **VLADIMIR BERNSHAM**

**I**n times of war, revolutions, and other major social upheavals, a state's monetary system is often profoundly tested.

In these cases it sometimes becomes necessary to issue local types of money.

Examples of these emergency issues include the notgeld notes in post-World War I Germany, Russia's local currency during the Civil War, and, most recently, the "kolkhoz money" used during the "Perestroika" period in the Soviet Union.

Of course, there are many other examples in other nations.

But for Jews, these are among the more important issues of the 20th century.

Such emergency local currency fills the vacuum in the money circulation of the relevant regions.

Typically, official documents and other official evidence related to the issuance of such "money" cannot be found.

Even less information can be found about people and events directly involved with the process leading to the issuance of this emergency money.

During the Russian Revolution of 1917, when the Tsar's empire collapsed and was replaced with another totalitarian regime, the communities of

small Jewish towns or shtetls in western Russia contributed to the production of emergency local money and the survival of those communities.

Emergency notes that functioned as paper money issued by various organizations in shtetls during the chaotic period of 1917 to 1920 are described in the book *Jewish Paper Money in Russia* by D. Kharitonov, published in 2003.

Before 1917, the bulk of the Jewish population of tsarist Russia lived in small villages - shtetls (שטעטל) - and larger but still small municipalities with a predominantly Jewish population.

These towns, located in western Russia on the territory of the empire were once a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth (Rzeczpospolita).

Many Jews of the former Soviet Union came from these towns.

While reading Arkady Shulman's book (*ОТКУДА ЕСТЬ ПОШЛИ КОЛЫШКИ*) on the history of the shtetl Kolishki - the community of my ancestors on the maternal side in modern-day Belarus - I was surprised to discover that some of my distant relatives had participated in issuing emergency local money in Kolishki during the Russian Revolution.

For me, as a collector, it was an excit-

*Continued*

# RESEARCH UNVEILS DEEP LINK

*Continued*

ing discovery and very interesting to supplement already published information about “kolyshinski banknotes” with information about relatives who helped create the notes.

Shulman describes the history of my ancestral shtetl: the population of Kolishki at the beginning of the 1800s consisted of four Christian merchants and four Jewish merchants, 421 Christian burghers and 408 Jewish burghers.

By the time of the 1847 census, Kolyshski’s Jewish community was estimated to number 508 people.

And by the beginning of the 1900s, “Kolishki was a large Jewish shtetl. In 1897, 1,568 people lived there, 1,127 of them Jews.”

Another resource helped me find more information about my ancestors and the rare emergency notes issued in Kolishki.

In the middle of the nineteenth century a merchant, David Itkin, lived in Kolishki. We can learn about this man from the memoirs of professor Solomon Nezlin.

Itkin was born into a poor family. At age 15, he went on his own initiative to the Tambov province where he purchased a batch of horses to sell them to local peasants and was able to give back to his parents the money he had borrowed.

Itkin soon moved to Kolishki, got married at the age of 16, built a spacious two-story house, and fathered four sons and two daughters.

Itkin became a flax trader, and soon became wealthy; providing for his large family and giving a good upbringing for his children, who studied in the heder.

He was handsome, tall, and imposing.



*Haime Nezlin*

---

He liked to dress well and ordered his suits the best tailors from Vitebsk, Prof. Nezlin’s memoirs report.

“Despite his [own] lack of general education, he showed great interest in historical events ...

“David Itkin was a patriot of the Jewish people, sympathizing with the national movement. In a prominent place in his living room hung a portrait of [Theodore] Herzl, he listened with joy to excerpts from the history of the Jews by Graetz and stories written by Sholom Aleichem.

Itkin’s sons taught themselves Russian, and subscribed to Russian newspapers and magazines.

Itkin’s eldest son - Zeev Wolf – is my great-grandfather. And his older sister, Judith, married Haime Nezlin, the

*Continued*



# EMERGENCY CURRENCY VITAL

*Continued*

father of Prof. Solomon Nezlin.”

In his memoirs Prof. Nezlin writes about his father: “Despite his religious upbringing (he) acquainted himself with secular literature in Hebrew and Russian on his own initiative.

“At that time, in the circles of the most cultured and inquisitive Jews, a new movement - ‘Askala’ (Enlightenment) was born. Representatives of this movement, still observing Jewish traditions, argued that in addition to studying Torah and the Talmud, Jews should also be exposed to [other] languages, history and human values.”

The Askala slogan was - “Be a Jew in your home and a man outside of it.”

One of the most prominent advocates of these views was the writer Yehuda-Leib Gordon, who greatly influenced my father’s world outlook.

Nezlin continues: “My father possessed outstanding abilities and exceptional memory. He knew by heart the entire Tanach. Like his father, my grandfather, was also honest, truthful and treated lies and deceit with disgust.

He had a small trade for 15 years and had a iron-workers shop, where his customers were “peasants.”



*Emergency local notes issued by various shtetls in western Russia during the 1917 Revolution included these 6-ruble notes from Zinkiv in the Ukraine. Image from “Jewish Paper Money of Russia.”*

Small classes often located in the house of the rabbi.

Here’s a quick introduction, which will allow the reader to understand the connection between our family and the origin of kolyshki’s “Nezlinki.”

Having collected a lot of interesting material on the Kolishki, Arkady Shulman writes about Kolyshki’s money in his book:

“Banknotes issued by the local ...

*Continued*



# ANCESTORS HELPED CREATE NOTES

*Continued*

community were circulated both in the town and in the neighboring villages, not only in the Vitebsk region, but also in the Smolensk region.

“In Vitebsk itself the Kolyshki’s banknotes were also accepted, but were taken as money only by the merchants that knew the chairman of the trading community, Haime Nezlin, a decent and respected man, personally.”

Printed on plain paper, the emergency banknotes were in circulation for several months.

The main protection against counterfeiters was the stamp and personal signature of Haime Nezlin.

The people termed this money “Nezlinki,” probably taking the idea from “Kerenski” banknotes.

Kolyshki’s banknotes were redeemed from the population and then destroyed by burning after the re-establishment of national government currency following the revolution.

Researcher Kharitonov, in *Jewish Paper Money of Russia*, notes that in 1918, the members of the Kolishki Jewish community were issued “receipts” in denominations of 1, 2, 3, 5 and 10 rubles.

Currently “kolyshki’s banknotes” are very rare.

In describing the history of Belarusian collecting, Lev Kolosov wrote in *Pages of History of the Belarusian Philately* about the collection of G. A. Zubkov,



*The Provisional Government of Alexander Kerensky issued 20-ruble notes following the Russian Revolution in 1917.*

who “was considered one of the greatest Belarusian [banknote collectors]. His collection includes almost all of Belarusian banknotes, some as rare as the issues of the Jewish community in Kolishki.”

Working in the financial structure of the B.S.S.R., G.V. Voskresensky was a member of the Commission that liquidated “private money” of Kolishki.

In a 1928 article in the “Soviet Philatelist” magazine (№ 6 /82, 1928), Voskresensky wrote an article about “Kolishki’s banknotes” under the pseudonym “The

*Continued*



# DOCUMENTATION RARE BUT EXISTS

Continued  
Collector.”

Along with the 2003 book *Jewish Paper Money in Russia*, the Voskresensky article is the main source of information about “Nez-linki” notes.

The 1928 article provides yet another “popular” name for the emergency local notes - “kigilki.”

Voskresensky connects this name to the fact that the money was printed on behalf of the Board of the Jewish community - the “Kagala.”

The members of such boards were usually the most respected people town - the rabbi, the butcher, and the treasurer - and they were responsible for issuing the banknotes into circulation.

The emergency local notes were not large, measuring only 10 centimeters by 6 centimeters.

Pictures of the banknotes are absent in

Kharkov Jewish Society of Consumers «INDEPENDENCE». Coupon  
Харьковское Еврейское Общество Потребителей  
«САМОДЯТЕЛЬНОСТЬ». Купонъ



K-12

Uniface, 110 x 90 mm. Russian text on the left half note and Yiddish on the right half:  
Acceptable in all institutes of Society in exchange for goods or money.  
Printed Ser.#, three sign. and ink seal. Two kinds of seals — with Russian or Yiddish text.

First issue. Frame with flowers. Seal with Russian text.

Cat.#	Denom.	Date	Description	Fine	XF
K-11	50 Kop	ND(1918)	Rose paper		
K-12	1 Rub	ND(1918)	Yellow paper	Rare	
				300	500

A page from the only catalogue of emergency local currency issued by Russian Jewish communities or shtetls during the 1917 Revolution include this page on the notes of Kharkov. Image from the 2003 book *Jewish Paper Money in Russia* by Dmitri Kharitonov, 2003, Partner Praha publishers, 137 pp, in English and Russian.

both Voskresensky’s article and the 2003 book, but Vosresensky gives a fairly complete description of them.

We reproduce this description with some edits and comments (and replace the distorted Russian transcription of Hebrew words with text in Hebrew).

“On the obverse of the banknote, sur-

Continued



# SHTETL NOTES RECALL HISTORY

rounded by a stylish frame, there was an inscription in two lines: the upper line of the Hebrew שטר מיוחד חמישה רובלים and the same inscription in Russian (the second line) "Receipt for (five) rubles".

In the lower left corner of the notes was a round stamp of the communities with an inscription along the rim in Russian: "The Committee of Jewish Community" and "Kolishki, Viteb. Gub".

Also on the same side were the signatures of "יושב-ראש" (chairman) and the signature by hand in ink (in Hebrew) of Zalman Noah, "מזכיר" (secretary), M. Reichman, and "גזבר" (Treasurer) Nezlin.

On the reverse side there was an inscription ... in Hebrew consisting of 4 lines: הקהילה העיבריים, קולישקי, ויטבסק פלך (Board of Jewish Community, Kolishki, Vitebsk Province.), and "יום" (day), "לחודש" (month), "שנת" (year).

The emergency notes were printed on thin paper, using a simple rubber stamp. To facilitate the recognition of banknotes of various denominations for a largely illiterate population, round seals were placed on banknotes. The toothed circles contained numbers corresponding to the banknote's value: 1, 2, 3, 5 and 10 rubles, all issued in 1918.

The stamp was placed in the lower right corner of the front of the banknote, and on the sides of the back side, slightly lower than the middle of the banknote.

Kolishki's emergency local notes were issued in two colors: pink and blue. Some of the banknotes had the signature of the treasurer – Vydrich

instead of a signature of "treasurer Nezlin".

Voskresensky believes the number of banknotes issued was just a few thousand, as he saw some notes that had numbers higher than 2,000. The notes were in circulation for several months and were removed after the release of new national banknotes into circulation.

Such notes are very rare today.

But the discover of a personal connection through my ancestors to a key survival tactic of Russian shtetls during a time of great upheaval has been greatly rewarding and has greatly enhanced my collecting experience. נ

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*Ed. Note: Check Rosenblum Coins website, [www.rosenblumcoins.com](http://www.rosenblumcoins.com), or contact the company about the possibility of acquiring Khartinov's book or other books or notes of this fascinating era of emergency money issuance.*



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# THE SALE OF THE CENTURY

BY IRA GOLDBERG

*The inside story of the auctioning of the extraordinary  
Abraham Bromberg collection of ancient Jewish coins  
conducted in 1991 and 1992.*

The story of how I obtained for auction the fabulous collection of Abraham Bromberg can now be told because most of the players are now deceased: Dr. Leo Mildenberg, Sylvia Hurter and Abraham Bromberg.

First, a little background.

I have had a passion for ancient Jewish coins since I was a teenager.

After the Six-Day War in 1967, the West Bank area opened up, and a flood of new coin finds started to ap-



*Lot No. 56 in the Abraham Bromberg collection auction Part I: A Prototype silver shekel, 13.34 grams, dated Year 1, 66 C.E. Obverse with Temple vessel with pearl on either side, surrounded by dots; above, the date. The first coin type of the Jewish War. By issuing their own coinage, the Jews were declaring their own freedom, and war on the Romans. The Pre-auction estimate: \$150,000-\$200,000. Sold for \$242,000.*

*Continued*

# Abraham Bromberg: In his own words

I was born in Leipzig, the son of a fur trader. In fact, my family has been fur traders for six generations.

Because of our family business, the difficulty Jews had in Europe and central Russia (my grandmother lived in Moscow) during the Great War, the Russian Revolution and World War II, I lived in many countries, adopting all and yet none truly as my own.

As a boy, I collected stamps; the passion grew and eventually I formed a comprehensive collection of the Mandate postage stamps of Palestine, including all the rare overprints and perforation varieties.

In this endeavor, the renowned expert Werner Hoexter guided me, along with the assistance of Major Darlow. It is through Werner Hoexter that I met his former fellow student Leo Milderberg in Zurich in 1950, but I must save this for later. You see, I believe when you collect you must become a dealer as well, indirectly, to know all about the market itself, the buying and selling. Also, you should become an expert as well in one specialized field, so you can know a little bit more than others; only then does true joy begin.

I met Leo Milderberg in 1950, as I mentioned, through Werner Hoexter, purchasing from him at Bank Leu two ancient Jewish coins. Leo Milderberg had started the numismatic department for Bank Leu in 1949, so my relationship with him goes back a long way. I well know by now that obtaining the advice of an expert is indispensable in forming a substantial collection. Later I received the valuable advice of Ya'akov Meshorer, Keeper of the Coins of the Israel Museum. At that time, I could not afford to



*Abraham Bromberg in a portrait from the 1991 Part I auction conducted by Superior Galleries.*

collect both stamps and coins. After having sold my philatelic holdings, I began to collect Jewish coins seriously.

I have had much excitement in trying to obtain as complete as possible a collection by dies of the Bar Kokhba coinage outlined in Milderberg's corpus. In the mid-seventies it was a fortunate time for this, as many large hoards were on the market, and with the help

of several friends in Israel and the guidance of Leo Milderberg, my collection was indeed taking good shape. While I feel that the Year 4 half bronzes [nos. 73-74 in this catalogue] are my favorites and I consider them the most fascinating of all ancient Jewish coins, the obtaining of the great rarities struck in the Jewish War - the prototype shekel and quarter shekel in this catalogue and the half shekel of Year 4 and shekel of Year 5 to be offered in 1992 - was filled with great excitement and some intrigue.

A great deal of understanding and encouragement in my collecting endeavors has come from my wife Ursula. I wish to publicly thank her for her assistance and patience. We felt the collection was too large to offer at one time, so the second part will be held one year from now, in December of 1992.

All my proceeds from the sale of the coins will be given to Jewish institutions. While I am saddened by the loss of the coins themselves, this scholarly reference catalogue will provide me with great pride; also I will feel the satisfaction that other collectors will find new treasures.

*Abraham Bromberg  
[1914 to 1998]*



# BROMBERG'S FAVORITE A SURPRISE

*Continued*

pear on the market.

It was then that I made the first of many pilgrimages to the Holy Land. Those journeys were many years ago, but I believe it must have been on my second or third trip when I first met Leo (Dr. Mildenberg).

Leo recognized my enthusiasm for ancient coins, and ancient Jewish coins in particular. And I always found time to stop by Leo's offices at Bank Leu in Zurich, either on my way to Israel or on my return trip to the States. There, we would chat at length about recent finds in Israel and new coins he had acquired.

At the time, Leo was working on his monumental opus which would be published in 1984: *The Coinage of the Bar Kokhba War – Typos Band VI*.

The first selection of everything that Leo acquired was offered to his good friend and client Abraham Bromberg, an Italian furrier.

Next, coins were selected for the Leu Auctions; I was fortunate enough to get third or fourth pick, which for me still was fantastic.

Leo guided Bromberg and personally acquired for him all of his purchases.

Over the course of three decades, they built one of the finest collections of ancient Jewish coins ever



Abraham Bromberg stated, in his autobiographical sketch at the beginning of the Part I auction catalogue, that this coin - one of two large bronze half-shekel coins - was his favorite of the collection. The obverse, top, depicts a palm tree with seven branches flanked by two baskets of dates. Bromberg considered this design to "the most beautifully composed coin type of the entire Jewish series (and) might well have proved the inspiration for the Roman series of *Judaea Capta* issues ... Modern Israeli medals, stamps and coins have utilized this obverse design as well."

formed.

Abraham had begun buying from Leo back in 1950,

*Continued*



# AUCTION PROCEEDS DONATED

*Continued*

soon after Leo started the numismatic department for Bank Leu in Zurich in 1949.

Leo and Abraham were about the same age. Around the end of the 1980s, they began to discuss the possibility of selling the collection.

Bromberg's wife was considerably younger than Leo, and she had little interest in coins.

Leo must have been in his 70s at this time, but quite active. He was still cross-country skiing when he broke his hip.

When Leo and Abraham decided to sell the collection, they also decided the only way to sell it would be through auction.

Why didn't Bank Leu auction off the collection since Leo was now a director of Bank Leu?

He was quite proud of being the first Jewish director of a Swiss bank. Leo also was a master auctioneer - the finest I've ever seen, bar none! And he was the most competent cataloger in the field.

So, why didn't Leo simply conduct the sale himself?

The reasons were two-fold. Leo would hint to me that there was still some old-time resentment of his being a director. Secondly,



*A Year 1 tetradrachm of the Bar Kochba Revolt portrays the Temple of Jerusalem with the Ark of the Covenant, in chest form, within the Temple interior. The letters surrounding the Temple translate into English as Jerusalem.*

his understudy, Sylvia Hurter, was not enamored of Jewish coins.

There also was growing resentment within the bank and in the numismatic offices about the amount of time Leo was spending on Jewish coins as well as on his personal collection of ancient miniature animal carvings.

Leo asked me if I would like to handle the collection in a scholarly manner.

Of course, I jumped at the chance.

The task of putting together a first class catalog, written by a scholar, was overseen by Leo. He was even involved in the type font and in the weight of

*Continued*



# EXTREME RARITIES AT AUCTION

*Continued*

the paper we selected.

Dr. Paul Rynearson was my first choice to catalog the collection. Leo wholeheartedly agreed. Paul knew exactly how he wanted to present the coins and Leo was in total agreement.

I was, to be quite honest, a little gun-shy on what this would all cost, since I was not sure there would be any profit left over.

Yet, this auction required a catalog of the highest caliber, using state-of-the-art photography, and had to be promoted world-wide and conducted in New York at a first-class venue.

In addition, the sale was scheduled to take place in two parts, held one year apart.

At the time, I thought "No way was I going to make any money on this deal!"

The "kicker" on all this? Whatever Leo and I agreed upon, the final word on all decisions would have to come from Bromberg himself.

Leo flew to Beverly Hills with the Brombergs. We



*A Year 1 quarter shekel of the First Revolt with a Temple vessel on the obverse and a stem with three pomegranates on the reverse. The reverse carries the inscription "Jerusalem is Holy" and the coin was declared in the auction catalogue to be "the second and finest known example." This quarter shekel had a pre-auction estimate of \$100,000 to \$150,000. The final sale price was \$253,000.*

met before dinner at my father's home in Beverly Hills. It was the first time I had met the man. He was absolutely charming.

I understood why Leo liked him so much. All went well and it was agreed: the Goldberg's would sell his collection.

The first auction, *The Abraham Bromberg Collection of Ancient Jewish Coins Part 1*, took place at the Drake Hotel on Dec. 5, 1991.

The auction was an absolute blockbuster and all sorts of world-record prices were set. The actual sale was held in the lobby of the hotel since no other room could hold all the interested bidders.

In fact, I had to stand on a wooden milk carton to call the sale because I could

*Continued*



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# BEST OF BAR KOCHBA COINS

*Continued*

not see over the crowd!

The bidding was fierce. When the dust settled after the sale of the first of the most important coins, a major trend became clear.

On major coins, bidding came down to two buyers: Joseph Kaufman of Brussels, a diamond dealer who was in the room in person. The other bidder was "a distinguished American Collector" whom we referred to as "AC" (for American Collector), who was connected to the auction by telephone.

Kaufman's method of making payment for his purchases was truly unique.

Remember, the sale was being held in New York and the invoices were being run in our offices in Beverly Hills.

This seems antiquated by today's standards, but that was how it was done then.

Before we were even able to print the invoices and send them to New York, two ultra-religious Orthodox Jews come to our offices in Beverly Hills.

And they handed my father a bag full of cash – payment in full for all of the



*A Year 1 (132/2 C.E.) silver denarius portrays a triform grape bunch on the obverse with a vine leaf hanging from a branch; the inscription is "Year One of the redemption of Israel." The reverse depicts a one-handed jug with a palm branch to the right and an inscription eleazar the priest. Considered "very rare and of prime importance to any advanced collection of Bar Kokhba coinage." In Extremely Fine condition, with a pre-auction estimate price of \$25,000 to \$30,000. Sold for \$44,000.*

Kaufman purchases!

The same auction scenario took place the following year when we sold *Bromberg Part 2*, this time at the Sheraton New York Hotel on Dec. 11, 1992.

Again, the auction was a wild sale with the same two bidders competing fiercely against each other on the most important coins.

New price levels were set and everyone left shaking their heads in amazement.

Of course, by today's standards most of the prices reached at the auctions look like bargains.

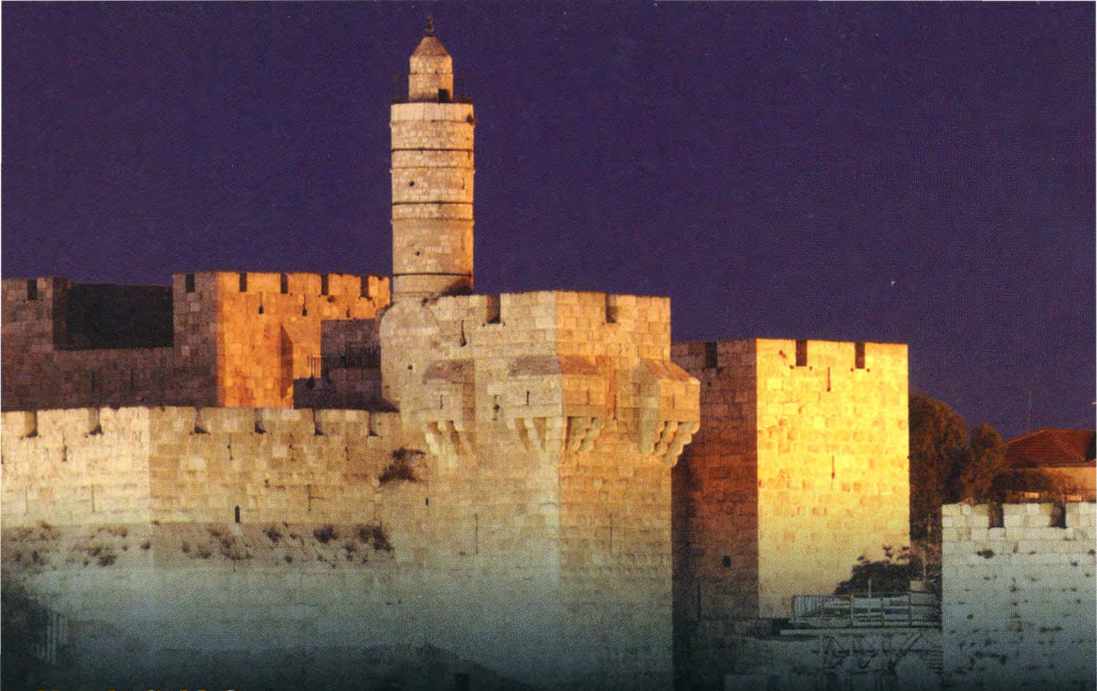
I am pleased to report that Abraham Bromberg was a real "mensh."

He donated all of his proceeds from these two sales to various Jewish institutions - and when all was said and done, we did make a profit! ☞









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# HISTORY IN YOUR HANDS

DATES ON ANCIENT JUDAEAN COINS AID  
UNDERSTANDING OF ANCIENT TIMES

By AARON KOGON

Many, if not most of the ancient coins minted in Judaea have a date on them; that helps modern archaeologists and numismatists find the exact date when the coin was minted. Dating these coins is very important. By pinpointing the year they were minted, we can learn from the coin what was happening during that time.

For example, from the anchor depicted on the Alexander Jannaeus half-prutot/leptons (Hendin 472) we can see (according to Ya'akov Meshorer's theory) that Jannaeus was publicizing the conquest of the coastal cities such as Gaza in the year the coin was dated, 78 B.C.E.

The first time we see dates on Jewish coins, the date is in both Greek and Aramaic, and both are on the Alexander Jannaeus half-prutah.

On the side of the half prutah with the image resembling an eight-spoked wheel, or an eight-rayed star, the Aramaic text

מלכא אלכסנדרס מלכא

surrounding the star/wheel translates into Hebrew as



*Images courtesy Rosenblum Coins*  
*A Jannaeus half-prutot (Hendin 461), struck circa 78 B.C.E., is one of the first ancient Jewish coins to carry a date.*

כה שנת.

This inscription means KING ALEXANDER, YEAR 25. The inscription uses one of the two different ways to state "year" on ancient Jewish coins.

*Continued*

# DATING BRINGS ANCIENTS CLOSER

*Continued*

The word שנה is Hebrew for YEAR OF, and comes from the word שנה which means YEAR. The two letters כ (Kaf) and ה (He) that follow the word YEAR OF on this coin state, obviously, the year.

Even though the First Revolt (66 to 70 C.E.) prutot uses the Hebrew word for the number of the year, these small coins also use what is known as "Gematria" or Hebrew numerology.

In Gematria, the first nine letters of the Hebrew alphabet stand for the number of the

order they are in, for example, with א (Aleph) as the first letter, and therefore meaning the numeral 1 (one).

The fifth letter, ה, means the numeral 5. The nine letters after ו stand for the numbers in the tens place. For example, י (Yod) is the 10th letter of the alphabet, so it stands for 10. The 11th letter means 20. This pattern of increasing by a multiple of ten every nine letters continues up until the last letter, ת, (Tav) which is the 22nd letter of the alphabet, and means 400.

The only exception to this is when you write the number 15 and 16. To avoid writing one of God's names, 15 is written as טו with ט meaning 9 and

ו representing 6. Thus, 16 is written as טז with ט meaning 9 and ז meaning 7.

On the Jannaeus half prutah טה is 25, with ט meaning 20, and ה meaning 5.

To figure out the year with the Gregorian calendar, we know Jannaeus' reign started in 103 B.C.E., right after

the reign of Aristobulus.

In other words, the year is (-103); so, we can calculate  $(-103) + 25 = (-78)$ , so 25 years after 103 B.C.E. is 78 B.C.E. Therefore, we know the coins were minted in 78 B.C.E.

Another way of writing numbers

on Judaeen coins is by plainly writing them out.

For example, if I wanted to state Year 2 without writing "2," or instead of writing "Year B," we could write Year Two.

This is seen on the First Revolt Year 4 siege coins, the First Revolt prutot, and many coins of Bar-Kochba.

On the Year Two prutah (Hendin 661), on the amphora side, the ancient Hebrew text is written as:

שנת שתי

In modern Hebrew, this would be written as שנת שתי with the modern

---

**'The Gematria dating system simplifies the proto-Hebrew alphabet into a digital analog of the letters of that alphabet.'**

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*Continued*



# YOUNG AUTHOR DECIPHERS COIN DATES

*Continued*

Hebrew word שנים meaning "2."  
Once again, שנה means YEAR OF.

On many other Jewish coins, the word for the year is written in short form. On First Revolt shekels from Years Two to Five, the word YEAR (OF) was written as:

שנ

But the short form is written as:

ש

On the Year One shekels (including the rare "prototype" Hendin 654 examples), YEAR was left out completely.

The shekels just had the letter that stood for 1 in Gematria:

א

The Greek dating system used on ancient Judaeen coins is very similar to the Hebrew use of Gematria on coins.

As in ancient Hebrew, there were several ways in Greek to write YEAR, but the main one used on Judaeen coins preceded the date with L. L is not a Greek letter, and probably derived from an Egyptian hieroglyph.

In ancient Hebrew, there were ways to say the date in words that were spelled out or truncated with just letters.

On Judaeen coins, only the "letter method" is used.

The first nine letters of the Greek alphabet represent numbers in ascending order, that is, from one to nine, with A as 1, B as 2, all the way to as 9. Then, the next nine letters stand for numbers increasing by tens; for example, I as 10, K as 20 up to as 90.

This logical progression follows the same pattern until the last Greek letter X, which equals 600.

For example, if you see LMA on a prutah issued by the Procurator Mar-

*Continued*

## GEMATRIA DATING CHART

א	1	י	10	ק	100
ב	2	כ	20	ר	200
ג	3	ל	30	ש	300
ד	4	מ	40	ת	400
ה	5	נ	50		
ו	6	ס	60		
ז	7	ע	70		
ח	8	פ	80		
ט	9	צ	90		

# SIMPLE SYSTEM DATES COINS

*Continued*

cus Ambibulus (Hendin 638), we see that L is YEAR, M is 40 and A is 1, thus it was struck in the 41st year of the reign of Emperor Augustus (11 C.E.).

We previously read the Hebrew year of the Alexander Jannaeus lepton, so now we are going to read the Greek year.

The coin has the legend ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ ΑΛΕΞΑΝΔΡΟΥ LKE surrounding the anchor.

Just like with the Hebrew, the anchor side legend says KING ALEXANDER, YEAR 25, with L meaning YEAR, K meaning 20, and E meaning 5.

On some coins minted by the Herodians (in denominations bigger than prutot), the full Greek word for YEAR is used.

One example is Hendin 585, minted by Agrippa II.

The full reverse inscription says ETOYC AI TOY.

The first word, ETOYC, is the Greek word for YEAR. Referring to the Greek letter chart in this story, we see that A represents 1 and I represents 10.

We know 1+10 is 11, so ETOYC AI represents YEAR 11.

This coin was struck under the name of Emperor Nero, so YEAR 11 is 11 years after the reign of Nero, which started in 56 C.E.

This means the coin was struck in 67 C.E. Some abbreviated versions



*Image courtesy Rosenblum Coins*  
*A prutah issued under Marcus Ambibulus, procurator under Augustus 9-12 C.E. in gold bezel. Prutah is year 41 (Hendin-638) mounted in Star of David Shaped Bezel with loop. The Greek letters for the date, LMA, are faintly visible.*

of ETOΣ are ET, E or ETOYΣ.

There are many ways of showing the dates on ancient Judaeans coins, using both Greek and Proto-Hebrew.

Using various methods of reading ancient dates, we can discover the time and the period, either the year or years, when the coin was struck - and also discover a precise link to the past. □

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**Editor's Note:** Author Aaron Kogon is a secondary school student in Israel.

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# THE REAL STORY OF THE RESCUE OF BULGARIA'S JEWS

*CONTROVERSY STILL SURROUNDS SOME MAJOR WWII FIGURES, BUT ONE MAN STANDS OUT*

*By Mel Wacks NLG*

In 2003, Bulgaria issued a silver coin, containing less than an ounce of actual silver, and one of these coins recently was offered on Ebay for an astounding \$590!

That's a lot of money for a relatively new issue containing only about \$20 worth of silver.

True, the coin had a rather small mintage of just 2,000 pieces — but the key to the valuation is likely its Jewish theme.

Collectors in Israel, the United States, and around the world collect coins with Jewish themes, and the law of supply and demand evidently has pushed the price up for this issue.

The 2003 10-levs coin has a Cyrillic inscription commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Rescue of the Jewish People in Bulgaria, a six-pointed Star of David, and a portrait of Dimitar Peshev (ДИМИТЪР ПЕШЕВ).

Interestingly, the letter (Ш) representing the “sh” sound is derived from a Hebrew shin (ש) since there was no equivalent letter



*In 2003, Bulgaria issued a commemorative silver 10-levs coin honoring the 60th Anniversary of the Rescue of the Jewish People in Bulgaria. The portrait of Dimitar Peshev is posed next to the Star of David. Only 2,000 coins were minted, accounting for their high value today.*

*Continued*



# WWII RESCUE STORY UNCOVERED

*Continued*

in Greek uncial writing of the 9th century, on which the Cyrillic alphabet was based. The Hebrew tzade (צ) was also adopted as the Cyrillic letter representing the sound “ch” (ч).

This coin is particularly intriguing because Dimitar Peshev was not even mentioned in the article “The Rescue of the 50,000 – the story of the escape of Bulgaria’s Jews from the Holocaust not well known” by Bill Rapp, published in the May-June 2010 issue of *The Shekel*.

In 1973, Peshev was awarded the honor and title, *Righteous Among the Nations* by Yad Vashem. Yad Vashem’s website tells the story of Peshev’s transformation from a major political leader supporting Bulgaria’s alliance with Germany to an activist who worked to save lives from Nazi terror.

Bulgaria’s alliance with Germany was a strategic move for the country. Germany rewarded the alliance with Yugoslav territories it had lost in the Balkan war of 1912-13.

As Yad Vashem notes: “Peshev’s party which was the government majority party enacted anti-Jewish legislation, such as the 1940 Law for the Defense of the Nation, which restricted Jews’ participation in the country’s economic and social life



and imposed a special tax on Jews.

“In addition Jews were ordered to wear a Jewish star and male Jews were drafted for forced labor. The proposed bill produced mixed reactions. There was a certain support for the anti-Jewish measures, as well as protests by organizations such as the Bulgarian Writers Union and the Physicians Union.”

Initially, Peshev supported the bill, and explained his reasoning in his post-war memoirs.

“I was of the firm conviction that all this was indeed about bringing Bulgaria’s policies in line with those of Germany ... No one imagined that the measures would become permanent, let alone that they would take the same forms and proportions as those that were being carried out in

*Continued*



# DIMITAR PESHEV'S CRITICAL ROLE



*Medal honoring Dimitar Peshev, issued by the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation.*

*Continued*

Germany.”

Faced with the complexities of the political situation, Peshev believed the price the Jews had to pay was justified as it was balanced against Bulgaria's potential gains.

But as it turned out, more German demands were to follow.

In February 1942 the Bulgarian government agreed to deport 20,000 Jewish from Thrace and Macedonia. However, since there were nowhere near 20,000 Jews in these provinces, it was agreed to make up the difference with 6,000 Jewish from Bulgaria itself. The first such group of Bulgarian Jews was to come from Kyustendil.

When rumors about the intended deportations reached Peshev he acted promptly and traveled to Kyustendil. There he met with the assistant chief of police who told him about the planned roundups. He

also received delegations of Jews and non-Jews who implored him to intervene.

Two years earlier, Peshev had endorsed anti-Jewish measures.

But he now believed acquiescence to Germany's increasing demands was no longer an option.

Peshev chose not to continue ignoring the human cost of the benefits for Bulgaria. Organizing a parliamentary delegation, Peshev paid an official visit to Petr Gabrovski, the Minister of Interior.

Gabrovski's assurances did not assuage Peshev, and he pushed to bring the issue before Parliament.

A March 17, 1942 letter of protest, with 42 parliamentarian cosigners, was brought before the full Parliament despite the Prime Minister's request not to submit the letter.

The issue was brought before the majority caucus on March 23, 1943,

*Continued*



# BULGARIAN KING'S ROLE DISPUTED

*Continued*

in a session that quickly devolved into a confrontation between Peshev and the Prime Minister.

The Prime Minister, in an attempt to intimidate the co-signers, demanded each stand up and proclaim their support for the letter.

The tactic worked on some. But 30 of the original 42 stood their ground.

The Prime Minister skillfully maneuvered the debate into questioning the loyalty of the cosigners to Bulgaria, and not on the fate of the Jewish deportees,

In a final vote, the party declared its support of the Prime Minister and decided to censure Peshev. On March 30 he was forced to step down as the Parliament's vice president, and his request to be allowed to speak was rejected.

Cut off from the mainstream of his nation's politics, the ostracized Peshev still heard his protest resound among other political and clerical leaders. Eventually, Peshev's voice carried the day, and the Bulgarian government stopped plans to deport the Jews of Bulgaria.

While Jewish deportations from Bulgaria were halted, Jews from Thrace and Macedonia "were being deported by the Bulgarian authorities. The last transport to the death



*A medal issued in 1991 to honor Bulgarian King Boris III may have been a symbolic honor to the royal family following the dissolution of Communism in 1989.*



camps left on March 29, 1943."

It is interesting to note that Yad Vashem makes no mention of King Boris III of Bulgaria, who ruled in this same period—even though some historians give him much credit for saving the Bulgarian Jews during the Holocaust.

The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation similarly credits Peshev for this notable humanitarian act, and omits mention of King Boris III.

However, in 2009 an international symposium - *Who saved the Jews in Bulgaria during WW II?* - held in the Bulgaria's capital, Sofia,

*Continued*



# KING STILL HONORED FOR RESCUE

*Continued*

concluded that

“The rescue of the Jewish population of the Bulgarian Kingdom was a product of the united efforts of three forces - the king, the Orthodox Church and the Bulgarian society. None of them could

have achieved it alone. Without any doubt, the key role in this noble endeavor belongs to the man who was then at the highest place and who made the ultimate decision - King Boris III.”

This conclusion was based in part on reports of Professor Michael Bar-Zohar and Dr. Avraham Ben-Yakov of Israel.

A 40mm silver medal issued in 1991, in conjunction with a monarchist exhibition in Sofia, reflected the considerable interest in the former royal family after the 1989 collapse of the Communist regime in Bulgaria.

The 1991 medal depicts King Boris III along with his dates 1894-1943 and the name of the medalist, hastov.

The reverse features the King’s



*A 2004 Bulgaria postal stamp honors an Orthodox Church official, at left, and Dimitar Peshev, right, on the 60th anniversary of the rescue of the Jews of Bulgaria.*

monogram topped with a crown of thorns and the Cyrillic inscriptions for Sofia 1991 and A Life Dedicated to Bulgaria • Exhibition.

Nick Kaltchev has written about Boris’ actions in this symposium in Facebook:

“On April 4, 1943, German Foreign Minister Joachim v. Ribbentrop, after the talks he and Hitler had with Boris III in Germany, informs in a top secret note the Imperial Main Directorate for Security (RSHA) and the German ambassador in Sofia that the king was ‘not going to deport the Jews from the old territories of Bulgaria’, while Germany was insisting on the ‘final solution.’

“Boris III countered the German pressure with the argument that the Jews were needed in Bulgaria to

*Continued*



# 7,000 DID LEAVE BULGARIA SAFELY

build roads. On March 9, 1943, Interior Minister Gabrovski abruptly reversed the prepared orders to the district governors to go on with the deportation. On the next day these of the Jews who were already in custody, were released.

“The German ambassador, Adolf Beckerle, reported to Berlin: ‘It is more than certain that the interior minister was instructed from the highest place to stop the execution of the planned deportation of the Jews from old Bulgaria.’

“The deportation was indeed prevented from the highest place -- from the Palace. Alexander Belev, the head of the Office for Jewish Affairs, was infuriated.

“He shouted at the Chief Rabbi Asher Hannanel: ‘You should be grateful that you have powerful supporters behind you! Otherwise I would lock you up, together with your entire congregation this very evening and send you to Germany, not to Poland!’

“Monsignor Angelo Roncalli, the future Pope John XXIII, was Apostolic Delegate (papal nuncio) in Istanbul. In a letter to Boris III he intervened in favor of the Bulgarian Jews.”

On the copy of the letter Mgr. Roncalli noted, by hand, that the King replied verbally to his message.

The note goes on: “Il Re ha fatto

qualche cosa’ (‘The king has acted’) and, noting the difficult situation of the monarch, Mgr. Roncalli stresses once again: ‘Pero, ripeto, ha fatto’ (‘But I repeat, he has acted’).”

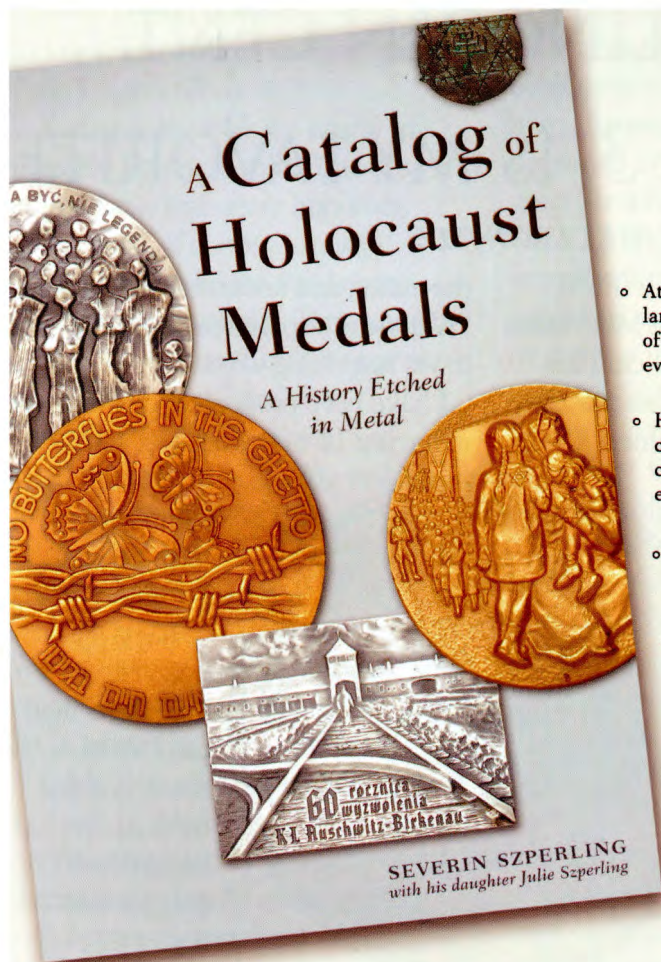
Kaltchev also reports that “One of the representatives of the Bulgarian Jewish community participating in the symposium ‘Who saved the Jews in Bulgaria during WW II?’ remarked: ‘Had the king not done what he did, neither you nor I would be able to be here to argue!’”

So whether it was Dimitar Peshev, King Boris III, a leader of the Greek Orthodox Church (as depicted on a Bulgarian stamp, along with Peshev, commemorating the 60th Anniversary of the Rescue of the Jewish People in Bulgaria), or a combination of efforts, we can be thankful that the lives of the Jews of Bulgaria were saved.

Between September 1944 and October 1948, some 7,000 Bulgarian Jews left for Palestine “due to deep-rooted Zionist sentiments, a relative alienation from Bulgarian intellectual and political life, and depressed economic conditions” ([www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org)).

The exodus continued (between 1949 and 1951, 44,267 Bulgarian Jews emigrated to Israel) until only a few thousand Jews remained in the country. Their estimated number in the late 1960s was 7,000, half of whom reside in Sofia, 1,000 in Plovdiv, and the remainder in other cities. ▢





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# TOP 10 REASONS WHY THE 2009 LINCOLN CENT, REVERSE 3, IS MY FAVORITE

By **JOEL ISKOWITZ**

When asked by my friend, JAHF President Mel Wacks to write about one of my coin designs for *The Shekel*, I was presented with a pleasant dilemma.

Not unlike having to choose a favorite child, how could I select one design above all the others when each program assignment has meant so much to me in all their specific and special ways.

As a United States Mint Artistic Infusion

Program artist, I have been fortunate to be invited to submit artwork for programs that reflect the breadth and meaning of our national heritage.

Conducting the research necessary to accurately portray our history on coinage has enriched my ap-

preciation and understanding of the “American experiment” in sometimes surprising ways.

I have been particularly blessed in having 18 of my designs selected

for minting. To some extent, they too can become a part of our collective history.

So, how then can I write about just one from a constellation of designs that depict four presidents (two of which are founding framers, John Adams and

James Madison), four First Ladies, an iconic musician (Duke Ellington for the District of Columbia quarter), a visionary who brought literacy to the blind (Louis Braille - Silver Dollar), Congressional Gold Medal recipients (Women Airforce



*Image courtesy U.S. Mint  
The 2009 Lincoln cent with Reverse 3, the “Illinois” reverse, is the favorite of Joel Iskowitz, and stands tall above his other 17 designs for U.S. coins and medals.*

*Continued*



# OF MEDALS AND MORE, ABE IS ACE

*Continued*

Service Pilots (WASP), or even the living symbol of our country (the Bald Eagle - Silver dollar).

You may see why it's nearly impossible for me to select one design above these important honorees.

That said, if choose I must, it would have to be the third reverse of the 2009 Bicentennial Cent, known as the "Profession Life" cent or simply the "Illinois Cent."

Why? Because I feel an overwhelming sense of destiny and am inadequate to task of describing my feelings in prose, I will simply enumerate 10 reasons that I am filled with profound gratitude that my artwork is part of this humble yet iconic coin, the most reproduced object of art in history.

1. My first oil painting at 8 years of age was of Abraham Lincoln based on a Mathew Brady photo reproduced in the family encyclopedia.

2. I spent an inordinate amount of time as a youngster playing games such as pitching and flipping cents with rubber balls.

The "heads," Lincoln's profile, or "tails," the wheat ears in those pre-1959 cents, ended up deciding all manner of issues.

This Lincoln cent coin was our currency, the children's money.

Occasionally we could possess nickels or dimes - and rarely, quarters - but it was with these pennies that we made our purchases at the corner

store.

3. As a professional artist, I have had occasion to depict Lincoln on book covers and stamps many times in my career. Each project's research deepened my appreciation and respect for this great soul.

4. The elaborate and even Byzantine selection process works in ways that are far beyond the control of anyone individual. I am deeply grateful that fate has allowed my artwork to be engraved on the reverse of Victor David Brenner's storied profile of Lincoln.

5. Because this design was selected, my wife and I were invited to Springfield, Ill., for the 200th Birthday Banquet at which President Obama, (arguably the living fulfillment of Lincoln's vision) spoke eloquently. My wife Suzanne and I got to meet and shake the President's hand twice.

6. Victor David Brenner, President's Theodore Roosevelt's second choice to bring about a renaissance in American coinage in the absence of Augustus St. Gaudens, adored Lincoln (as did TR), whose father served in the Lincoln White House. Together, these two men, a Lithuanian Jewish immigrant and an American president conspired to place an actual person, as opposed to an allegorical figure on our coinage for the first time.

7. A pilgrimage to the Sagamore

*Continued*



# TOP 10 LIST APPRECIATES LINCOLN

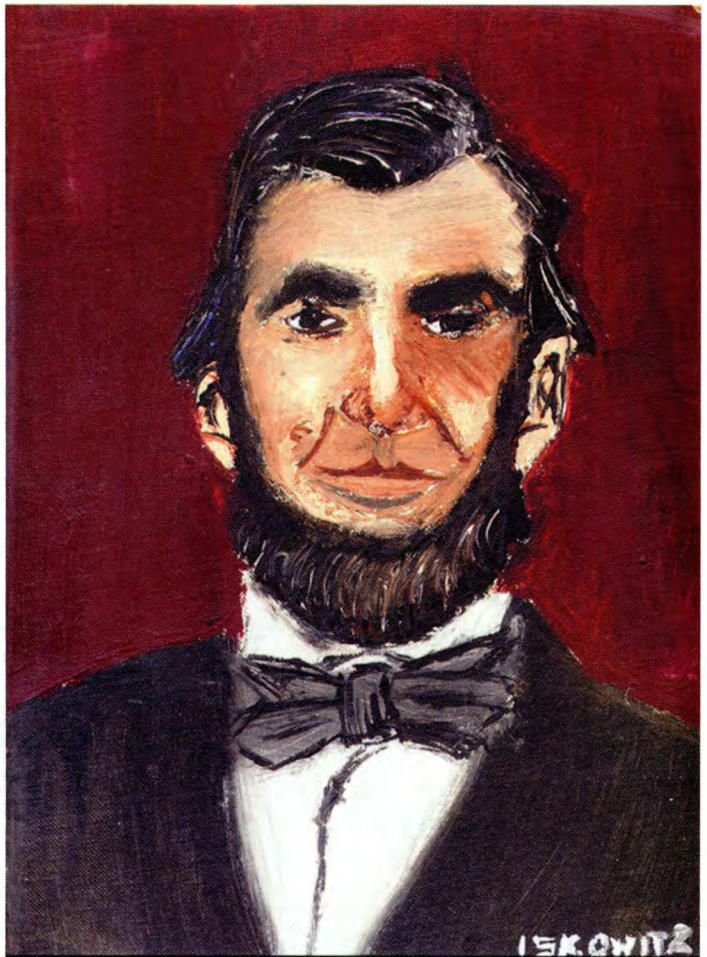
*Continued*

Hill, Oyster Bay library of the Roosevelt summer White House inspired my lithograph which depicts this historic moment when the Lincoln cent was conceived, later to be born as the iconic 1909 VDB cent.

8. Victor David Brenner was a founding member of the New York Numismatic club, which I am honored to be a member of 100 years later.

9. Lincoln was of humble origins, yet he became an inspirational iconic figure esteemed and venerated throughout the world. Similarly the cent is of humble worth monetarily but itself is a treasured icon world wide.

10. And the top and 10th reason why this is my favorite design is perfectly articulated in this poem from the New York Sun, which appeared during the year the Lincoln Cent was first issued:



*Image courtesy Joel Iskowitz*

*Designer Joel Iskowitz painted this portrait of Lincoln at age 8 and has never lost his fascination with the 16th President.*

*The millionaire may seldom  
Those noble outlines grasp,  
But childhood's chubby fingers  
The image oft will clasp.  
The poor man will esteem it,  
And mothers hold it dear.  
The plain and common people  
He loved when he was here ...  
The Lincoln Cent.*

*"The New York Sun," February 1909 - R*



# BALANCED ON THE BRINK



A 10 reichsmark "konversionkasse" (conversion money) is dated 28 August 1938 but is overstamped with 1934; the notes were authorized by the German government prior to the rise of the National Socialist German Workers' Party and were then used as a tool of oppression against Jews.

BY SIMCHA KURITZKY

## PART III

*Lethal storm clouds face early 20th-century pioneers seeking the establishment of a Jewish state free from oppression.*

The reparations for the Great War nearly destroyed the German and Austrian economies.

Cities, states, and groups issued their own tokens and scrip, including notes by the Anti-Semite League in Amstetten, Austria.

Dated April 16, 1920, the series has three notes: a green 10, orange 20, and blue 50 heller.

All the fronts have a drawing of several progressive newspapers in

flames, shown here on the 10 heller note on Page 40.

The backs each have a different Judeophobic quote, some of them astonishing for their revelations of the state of society in that era.

The 50 heller note tells readers to beware of the Jewish danger, to register at a local anti-Semitic protective society, and read only Christian papers.

The 50 heller note's back is the only note in the series to display the swastika, an Indian good luck symbol (northern Indians are also Aryans) appropriated by the anti-Semites and later by the Nazis (short for the Nationalist Socialist German Workers Party or NSDAP

*Continued*



# ZIONISTS ADOPT DEMOCRACY

*Continued*

in German) as a symbol of their racist global agenda.

## JEWISH AGENCY

In 1929, the Zionist Organization created the Jewish Agency, which was recognized by the League of Nations as the Jewish government in Palestine.

The Zionist Organization then allowed non-Zionist Jews to become members and have representation in the Zionist Congress.

The Zionist Organization had taken the unprecedented step of becoming a popular, democratic institution back in 1897: all Jews were invited to become voting members.

The First Zionist Congress, in 1897, set membership dues at one shekel, named after the Biblical tax.

This amount translated into 1 Belgian franc, 1 German mark, 1 Danish krone, 2 English shillings, half a U.S. dollar, or 40 Russian kopeks (these amounts were not equivalent in terms of actual foreign exchange rates but were based instead on the average wages in those countries).

By 1907, the organization had more than 160,000 paid members, and had a membership of one million by 1939.

In 1920, the Zionist Organization founded קרן היסוד Keren HaYesod "Founding Principal" to finance settlement in the Land of Israel.

A shekel receipt (shown on Page 41) was issued in 1934 to Avram Weiss for 10 Belgian francs.

The reverse has the following clause written in three languages: Hebrew, Yiddish (a Jewish German vernacular written in Hebrew char-



*The front of a 1920 Austrian Anti-Semite League 10-heller note depicts the burning of newspapers.*

acters), and English: "The Zionist Organisation comprises all Jews who accept the Basle Programme: The aim of Zionism is to create for the Jewish People a Home in Palestine [the Hebrew and Yiddish say Land of Israel] secured by Public Law," and pay the annual Shekel.

"The holder of this shekel receipt, if he (or she) has attained the age of eighteen years, is entitled to vote in the election of delegates to the Zionist Congress.

"Shekelholders who have attained the age of twenty-four years, and have fulfilled their obligations to the Keren Hayesod, are also eligible for election to the Zionist Congress."

*Continued*



# LAND FUND ESTABLISHED

Continued

## JEWISH NATIONAL FUND

Perhaps the most important work of the Zionist Organization was the acquisition of land for Jewish settlement.

Most of British Palestine was uninhabited desert that was owned by the government.

The Jewish National Fund (JNF) in Hebrew is called Keren Kayemet L'Yisrael ("The principal abides for Israel"), based on a passage of Talmud which states that, for certain good deeds, the interest is paid out in this world but the principal is paid out in the next (Pe'eh 1:1).

The length of JNF leases were 49 years, patterned after the Biblical injunction that land reverts back to the original owners in the jubilee (fiftieth) year, although the leases can be extended.

The JNF made small land purchases before World War I, but after the war began large-scale acquisition, beginning with 10,000 acres of the Jezreel Valley acquired in 1921.

By 1947, the JNF owned close to a quarter million acres.

The JNF also worked to make land usable, by draining wetlands, removing stones, planting trees and terracing hills.

These land transformation activities, which became the focus of the JNF after Israel's independence, allowed Jews to purchase unproductive land from the Arabs so that



A 1934 shekel receipt of the Zionist Organization entitled the holder, if of age and having completed obligations to the Keren Hayesod, to be eligible for election to the Zionist Congress.

Arabs would not be dislocated.

The JNF made possible the absorption of more than a third of a million Jews from 1919 to 1939.

A 27mm bronze medallion was given to contributors in the 1920s. On one side is a young woman walking left holding a basket on her head, accompanied by four

Continued



# JNF LAND PURCHASES GROW

*Continued*

sheep. The name of the organization appears below in Hebrew as קרן קימת לישראל. On the other side, a young man plays a flute while sitting under an olive tree. The artist's signature in Latin letters (N. Gli-chenstein) appears on the right side.

## JEWISH PUBLICITY

Faster and cheaper modes of transportation combined with a growing urban middle class made possible the great exhibitions and fairs of the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries. Before the advent of television and the Internet, - and in some cases, of movie newsreels - these were the only practical ways for most people to see the wonders of the world.

The fairs also served an important role in publicizing developing new industries, inventions, and ever-increasing economic activity.

Jews and later, Zionists, used exhibitions as a medium to educate the populace about Judaism as well as both the desire and ability to settle the Holy Land.

The Zionist Flag flew, together with the flags of many nationalities, over numerous buildings at the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair, where there was a Jerusalem Exhibit.

There was a Jewish Day and Pageant at the 1933 Chicago Century of Progress fair.

Palestine Pavilions were organized by the Jewish, not British, government at the 1924 British Empire Exhibition, 1931 International Colonial Exposition in Paris.



*Contributors to the Jewish National Fund in the 1920s received this 27 mm diameter bronze medallion.*



*A 30 millimeter gilded bronze medal issued at the Paris International Colonial Exhibition in 1931. The obverse at left shows the Palestine Pavilion and the reverse portrays Jewish agriculture of the Holy Land.*

Palestine Pavilions were also prominent at the 1937 Exposition of Art and Technology in Paris, and the 1939-1940 New York World's Fair.

Palestine Expositions were held concurrently with Zionist Congresses, such as the one in Vienna in 1925, and publicized by a colorful poster. In addition, agricultural expositions (later called the Levant Fairs) were held regularly north of Tel Aviv from 1926.

A 30mm gilded bronze medal was issued at the International Colonial Exposition of 1931, held in Paris.

The obverse shows the Palestine Pavilion, which housed exhibits of Jewish agriculture and industry in

*Continued*



# EXHIBITS POPULAR FORUM

*Continued*

the Holy Land.

Below the pavilion is the legend exposition coloniale/internationale/ paris 1931.

On the reverse is an olive branch and the territory's names, similar to the coins of the Mandate. While the English palestine and the Arabic فلسطين (Filastayn) appearing identical to what appears on Palestine coins. The Hebrew is ארץ-ישראל (Eretz Yisroel) Land of Israel, not Palestine, clearly indicating this medal was designed by the Jews and not the British who held the mandate.

These same names appear, though very small, on the left wall of the pavilion on the obverse.



*A colorful poster publicized the August 1925 Palestine Exhibition in Vienna, which took place alongside the 14th Zionist Congress.*

## ALTERNATIVE ZION

Once the Balfour Declaration announced a Jewish national home in Palestine, the search by Jews for alternative Jewish homelands essentially ended.

However, the Soviet Union had more Jews than any other country and was ardently anti-Zionist, banning the Zionist Organization in 1924.

The Kremlin's response to the need for a Jewish homeland was to set aside Birobijan (Birobidzhan), 14,000 acres of mountain, forest and flood plain next to Manchuria, for the Jews.

The Trans-Siberian and Chinese

Eastern railways had opened up the area for immigration in the 1890s.

More than 10,000 Jews moved to Manchuria (Harbin in particular) to escape, first the Czar, and then the Russian Revolution.

When the first Jewish settlers arrived in Birobijan in 1928, it was designated the Jewish National District.

More than 20,000 had moved there by 1934, when it was promoted to the Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR).

This number doubled as Jewish

*Continued*



# "PALESTINE PAVILIONS" POPULAR

*Continued*

refugees fled fascism and the lethal dangers of World War II.

Stalin had planned to force millions of Soviet Jews to move there as part of his anti-Jewish campaign (which included the murders of Yiddish poets in 1952), but his death intervened.

Even with their growing numbers, Jews were always a minority in Birobijan, and the economy never developed much beyond subsistence agriculture.

Today the region has 10,000 Jews, or almost 6 percent of the population. Yiddish is one of the official languages of the JAR and is seeing a revival as a spoken language there, and businesses are closed on Jewish holidays. A new synagogue was dedicated in 2002.

In the early days, actual money was scarce thousands of miles from Moscow. To compensate, Birobijan issued a variety of scrip.

A 48 x 57 mm white card was printed by the Birobijan baths in the 1930s and is valued at one ruble.

"Adult" is written at the top of the card in both Yiddish (דערוואקסענע) and Russian (Взрослый). In the top section of the box is דאָוואַנאַב נעראַדזשבירעב וועשערי-קאמבינאַט or "Birobijan Bath and / Laundry Combined".

The lower section of the box "has both Yiddish (רפ ילעטב לאַנטראָק) 1) and Russian (Контроль Билет Цена р. 1) for Control / ticket number (blank for the number) / Price R. 1.

It is not clear if the ticket is for having one's clothes laundered, taking a steam bath, using a mikva (religious bath) or is good for one



*A one-ruble white card from the Birobijan Jewish Autonomous Region of the Soviet Union from the 1930s has writing in both Yiddish and Russian and likely was used for either a steam bath, laundry or a mikva religious bath.*

ruble applied to any of all three.

## TRANSFER AGREEMENT

In 1933, German President Hindenburg appointed Hitler Chancellor.

The resulting Third Reich was a giant step backwards, right into the Middle Ages, completely wiping out the gains made since the Austrian Tolerance Edict of 1782.

Germany revived restrictions on where Jews could live, what jobs they could hold, and whom they could marry.

These new restrictions also defined Jews as those with one Jewish grandparent, regardless of their religion.

The international Jewish community was split on how best to respond.

*Continued*



# THIRD REICH'S ROAD TO HORROR

*Continued*

For the Zionists, the answer was obvious: get as many endangered Jews as possible into Palestine, even if they have to be smuggled past the British.

The assimilationists, on the other hand, wanted to use political and economic boycotts to change the policies of the Third Reich and fascist Poland.

They were concerned that Zionist efforts lent justification to Nazi allegations that there was an international Jewish conspiracy and Jews were foreigners even in the land of their birth.

These boycotts produced only cosmetic changes, such as Germany's "integrating" their Olympic team with one token Jewish athlete in 1936.

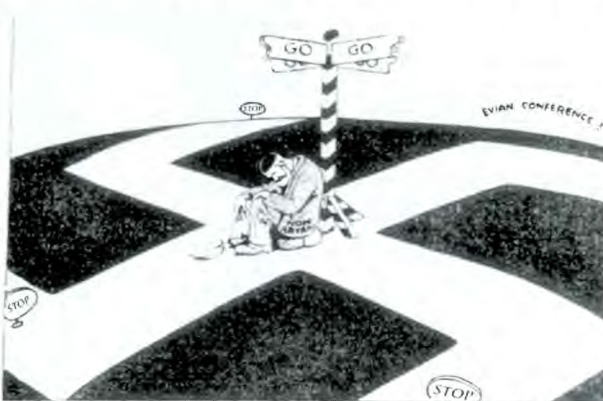
The Jewish Agency reached an agreement with the Nazis that would allow Jews to leave Germany and their assets would be transferred in the form of German exports.

This asset transfer weakened the boycott of German goods, but made it possible for Jews to become self-sufficient and find haven in countries which required immigrants to have assets.

About 100,000 Jews fled Germany, with half going to Palestine, under the Transfer Agreement.

This emigration was part of the Fifth Aliya, in which 250,000 Jews immigrated to Palestine, expanding the land's tiny middle class.

A newspaper's editorial cartoon of 1938, shown on this page above,



*A 1938 newspaper editorial cartoon depicts the dilemma of Jews attempting to escape the Third Reich. Even when permitted to leave by a negotiated Transfer Agreement, no destination was possible.*

captures the dilemma for those who were permitted to leave but could not find a place to go to, either through lack of resources or the refusal of other nations to accept Jews.

Part of the challenge of leaving Germany after the rise of the Third Reich was the restriction on exporting German marks that had been in place since 1931, prior to the rise of Nazism.

A konversionkasse (conversion money) note dated August 28, 1933, and shown on page 39 is of a 10-mark note overstamped with the year 1934.

Germany had banned exporting marks in 1931, before the Nazis came to power, because of the drain on the German economy from the reparations imposed after World War I.

In June 1933, Germany passed a law to permit marks to be exported, but the amount that could be exported was rationed based on the strength of the central bank. □

**NEXT: The storm breaks, but a miracle is in the making.**



# PROFILE OF AN ENGINEER

A chance encounter with an ancient coin as a young father on holiday with his family sparked a decades-long pursuit to understand the coinage of ancient Judaea for AINA member Stephen Fregger.

Steve had been interested in coin collecting since he was a young child, first by saving Lincoln pennies in a box and then graduating to filling the vacant holes in Whitman folders.

At the suggestion of his father, Steve would purchase four rolls of pennies from the bank each week, and spend an afternoon searching for missing dates and mint marks.

It was not uncommon in those days to find an Indian Head cent in a roll of Lincolns, Steve said recently. He also began to collect U.S. stamps while in high school in addition to collecting pennies. But, like many, Steve put aside his collecting during his college years and did not begin collecting again until after he had married and begun raising a family.

Pausing for family and career is not uncommon among collectors.

Stephan Fregger was born in Washington, D.C., grew up in Forest Hills, New York, and later moved to Miami where he graduated from high school.

Steve earned his Bachelor of Civil Engineering Degree from the Univer-



*Steve and Marcia Fregger*

sity of Florida in 1956, the same year he married Marcia. Steve and Marcia have two sons, four grandchildren and one great-grandson.

Steve began working for

the Florida Department of Transportation that same year, as Bureau Chief of Transportation Statistics in Tallahassee, and later, as District Director of Planning and Programs in Orlando, retiring from that company in 1988 after 32 years of service.

Coming out of retirement in 1992, Steve went to work for Baskerville-Donovan, Inc., as Project Manager of Transportation, and works there to this day.

Steve is a member of numerous professional engineering groups: Registered Professional Engineer, Florida; Fellow, Florida Engineering Society; Past State Vice President, Florida Engineering Society; Past National Director, National Society of Professional Engineers; American Society of Civil Engineers; and Past Tallahassee Branch President, American Society of Civil Engineers.

Steve's long list of engineering accomplishments and affiliations might suggest he, like many other collectors,

*Continued*



# ANCIENT INTEREST BEGAN EARLY

*Continued*

just did not have time to pursue coins while raising a family and advancing in his career.

But while on a family holiday while the children were still young, Steve's collecting interest was reborn. During each holiday season, the family would travel from Tallahassee to the Miami area, to visit relatives.

On one of these holiday visits to Miami, Steve stumbled unexpectedly upon an antiquities gallery while out on a walk.

He was amazed to see ancient coins and artifacts in the store's front window.

He decided to walk in and look around.

Thus began Steve's hobby of collecting ancients, everything from coins of Caesar and Mark Antony to Judaeon bronzes.

Steve would then return home and head for the Florida State University Library and its excellent numismatic section, where he would research all of his recent purchases to make sure they were authentic and properly attributed.

With Steve's collecting interests now totally immersed in ancients and Judaeon coins, he began to publish and speak on some of his knowledge with other collectors, organizations and publications.

He has had two articles published in *The Celator Journal of Ancient and Medieval Coinage*.

He also assisted Jean Philippe Fontanille in his preparation of his award-

winning Biblical-Judaeon coin databank website, "The Menorah Coin Project".

More than three dozen of Steve's Judaeon coins were used as aids for research.

Steve also has conducted several seminars on ancient Judaeon coins at Temple Israel in Tallahassee.

Recently, Steve was interviewed on live radio, via satellite, by a South African Jewish radio program on the subject of Judaeon coins.

Steve remains in contact with numerous leaders in Judaeon numismatics throughout the world by correspondence and on-line, in furtherance of Judaeon coin research.

Steve also has written two articles for *The Shekel*. The first article, "A Young Girl's Necklace," was about his Bar Kochba coin with a hole in it.

That article appeared in the September/October 2008 issue. For this article, Steve was honored by receiving the Ben and Sylvia Odesser Memorial Award in 2009.

Steve has been an AINA member for more than 25 years and has participated in two of AINA's Study Tours to Israel with his wife Marcia, in 1985 and 2008.

In his own words, Steve says that his "1985 tour was particularly memorable, because he had a Bar Mitzvah at the Wall in Jerusalem, along with Ben Odesser and Milton Gross."

Steve's second article for *The Shekel* was all about the circumstances of his Bar Mitzvah with Ben and Martin. □

*Written by Donna J. Sims, NLG*

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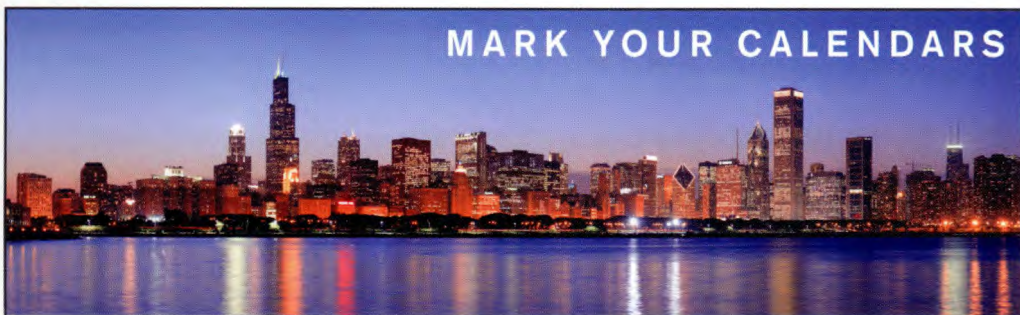
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